

*Cathedral Service Decent
and Useful.* 3

A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the
U N I V E R S I T Y
O F
O X F O R D

At S^t MARY's
O N
C E C I L I A's Day, 1713.

By W. DINGLEY B. D. Fellow of C. C. C.

Publish'd at the Request of the Lovers
of Church-Musick.

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TO
WILLIAM CROFT

D. Mus.

Composer and Organist

TO HER

Sacred MAJESTY.

SIR

WHEN I was
desir'd to Pub-
lish this Sermon,
there could be no

Dispute to whom I should De-
dicate it. It do's of Right be-

A 2

long

*long to You, Who are so great
an Ornament to Your Profession,
Who have Contributed so well
to the True Church-Musick, and
so much to the Happiness of*

Your most Oblig'd,

Humble Servant,

WILLIAM DINGLEY.

Cathedral Service

Decent and Useful.

Psalm CIV. 33, 34.

*I will Sing unto the Lord as long
as I live; I will Praise my God
while I have my Being. So shall
my Words please him.*

THIS being the Day which Custom
has Devoted to celebrate the De-
cency of *Cathedral Service*, to set
forth its Usefulness, to convince
the Gainsayer, to remove the Prejudice of
the Ignorant, and the Cavils of the Ma-
licious;

I design from these Words, which I have
made choice of for your present Medita-
tions, to Consider

First,

First, The Holy Psalmist's Resolution to Thankfulness. I will praise my God while I have my Being.

Secondly, The Manner of Expressing it. I will Sing unto the Lord as long as I live.

Thirdly, The Inducement to do it this way. So shall my words please him.

As to the First; a Resolution to be Thankful; it was the most Proper, the most Agreeable he could make. For Praise is the Religious Entertainment of Heaven: Praise shall be heard *within the Vail*, and survive all those Melancholy Acts of Devotion, that rather discover the Wants of the Votarys, than the Perfections of Him they Adore.

And therefore 'tis not said, *I will mourn in my Prayer as long as I live*, I will Hope and Believe *while I have my Being*. For these are Temporary Dutys, which must one Day cease. *Faith* and *Hope* shall have an end; *Sorrow* and *Sighing* shall flee away; since *Faith* is the *evidence of things not seen*: and *what a Man seeth, why do's he yet hope for?* Why should he Pray for what he has obtain'd? or how can he be thought to *Reap in Tears?*

When *Sion* shall be admitted to the Presence of her Redeemer, she shall put on Gladness

ness with her beautiful Ornaments, and shake off Contrition with her Dust. Her Warfare Then will be accomplish'd, therefore she will Importune no more; Then her Iniquity will be pardon'd, therefore she no longer shall Lament.

And yet the Exercise of Thanksgiving (That most pleasant kind of Worship) is not so Peculiar to the Inhabitants Above, as intirely to be lodg'd in the Regions of Happiness.

'Tis the hearty Tribute of Earth and Asbes, no less than of the Spirits of just Men made Perfect. The certain Expectation of those precious Promises set before us, and the powerful Assistance vouchsaf'd us to attain them, call us now to imitate, as far as we can, that Glorious Height of Adoration, which the sharing of them will for ever improve, when once we enter upon Immortality.

The very Privilege and Satisfaction of being inform'd before the Time, that we shall Rejoyce in the Day of Christ, is encouragement enough for our Rejoycing Now; while we live to Praise the Lord, and in the Days of our Flesh (tho' sometimes sullied with strong Crying) to Triumph in the Name of our Merciful Redeemer.

And truly, without some kind of Exultation, there could be no Tolerable living. Men would be apt to sink in the Mire, as they pass

pass along this *Vale of Misery*, were not their drooping Hearts Reliev'd with the Joy and Pleasure of being Thankful. Which Joy and Pleasure may be extracted not only from a View of the *Life to come*, but in a Subordinate degree from the various Blessings here below. And 'tis this chiefly that renders them Blessings; the substantial Advantage we derive from them is this, that they give us frequent Opportunitys to prostrate our selves with sensible Acknowledgements, with hearts full of Gratitude and Chearfulness.

We are surrounded with such a multitude of God's Mercies, his Personal, his National, his Universal Mercies, that he must be *dumb who opens not his Mouth* in the Commemoration of this Abundant kindness. *Thou art my God, and I will thank thee; Thou art my God, and I will praise thee!*

Nor will his severest Dispensations allow or justifie our Silence: it being the Case of None but the Damn'd to *Blesspheme* upon the account of their *Plagues*, to repine and howl without Intermission.

As long as we continue in this World, whatever our Lot may be, it cannot but furnish out sufficient Ground to Extol the Majesty that assign'd it.

The Rich, the Noble, and the Mighty are easily instructed from the Advancement of their

their Fortunes to glorifie the Munificent Disposer of the Earth, who, *when he set the Bounds of the Sons of Adam*, had a Peculiar Regard to Theirs.

The Poor, the Needy, and Afflicted may *glory also in their Tribulations*, that having but little committed to them, little of them will be requir'd; that They are *accounted Worthy to Suffer*, and to perform that difficult Task of *glorifying the Lord in the Fires*.

Let the *Brother of high degree* Rejoyce in that he is exalted for the Publick Good: Let the *Brother of low degree* joyn with him, whose Obscurity perhaps is more for his Own.

So that God in all things ought to be Glorified, whether he Opens, or Withdraws his Hand; whether he *maketh poor, or rich; bringeth down, or lifteth up*.

If we are endued with a strong Constitution, we cannot but Magnifie the *God of our Health*; if with a weak and sickly one, He is still the *God of our Praise*, dealing with us as with Sons. *For what Son is he whom the Father chastens not?*

The Man of Bright Parts and Quick Apprehension is by These directed to the *Fountain of all Wisdom*, that made Him to differ from Vulgar Abilitys: While Persons of slender Penetration and Thought are by no means exempt from the *Tribute of Praise*;

B

They

They being freed from That *increase of Sorrow* so commonly mix'd with the *increase of Knowledge*.

'Tis on all Hands agreed the Righteous should be glad (who have reason to be so, if They have not?) *God has deliver'd their Eyes from Tears in having preserv'd their Feet from falling*: And such as are wearied with the Load of their Iniquities, Tho' *for these things they deservedly Weep*, yet is not the *Offering for Sin* to juttle out the *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving*. They ought to Rejoyce over their Sorrow, that God has given them Repentance. *Who is he* (says the Apostle) *that maketh me glad, but the same also that was made sorry by me?* They ought to Adore the Mercy that spares them; and say, *O Lord, I will Praise thee, tho' thou wast Angry*.

There are no Circumstances so Bad, none so extremely Wretched, but may admit of a *Doxologie*, and the inserting a *Te Deum* with the most Contrite Humiliation.

And if, Besides this, we consider there is a Blessed State, an Inexhaustible Treasure, an Immortal *Inheritance*, a *Crown that fadeth not away*, of which all, if they please, may be Partakers; to which all are invited without Distinction; that *this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us*, that we should in every thing give Thanks; that a grateful Resentment of one Favour is in effect but praying

praying for Another, and deriving *more abundantly on Him that has*; that the joyfully receiving *his Fatherly Corrections* is the way to prevent the Fury of his Judgments, the *Chastening of his sore Displeasure*; that to Murmur and Complain is mean and little, suspecting the Care of our Almighty Protector; that slow Returns of Gratitude seem to call in question his indulgent Providence, as if *his Mercy were not over all his Works*, while we dissent from the Rest that praise him; that *for this end were we born, for this cause came we into the World*, that we might Extol his holy Name, who created all things for his Glory; that the Pious Early Ages of the Church, more Sensible of Mercies than of their Wants, sent up *ten Hosannas for one Petition*; and that They must now be *train'd up to Thanksgiving*, who hereafter shall *never depart from it*; Each of these Reflections singly, much more All of them together, with several others of the like nature, which might be brought in to swell the Account, will, I hope, prevail with us to confess, that *'tis very meet right and our bounden Duty, that we should at all Times, in all Places, in every Condition, upon every Occasion give Thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God!*

Whatever Station Thou in thy Wisdom hast allotted us, whatever Thou shalt think

fit to allot us, *we therein do rejoyce, yea and will rejoyce.* Wherefore (to draw the Son of Syrach's Inference) *Bless the Name of the Lord! and, when you Glorifie him, Exalt him as much as you can, for ev'n yet will he far Exceed.* Put forth all your Strength, and be not weary, for you can never go far enough! Who can Magnifie him as he is! we know, O Lord, that it is not in Man! Were his Inclinations never so Upright, his Faculties never so Inlarg'd, an impartial Scrutiny would pronounce him *Wanting.* 'Tis then highly Reasonable, that we should Exert to the Utmost of our Power, since the Utmost of our Power is but Weak and Defective. We should Curb and Reduce our misplac'd Affections, Suppress and Extinguish their *strange Fire,* if by any means they may kindle from Above; since we must needs fall extremely short, tho' the Zeal that warms us be Pure and Lasting: tho we *always give Thanks to the Lord,* and punctually discharge the Resolution in the Text, *I will praise my God while I have my Being.* The Manner of expressing which is the

Second Thing to be consider'd. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live.

In order to *shew forth the Praise* of God Almighty by a regular Life and Conversation

tion (the best and noblest Way of shewing it) we must *draw nigh to him with our Mouth,* and honour him with our Lips: by this means improving our Selves and Others, while the *Abundance of the Heart* overflows upon the Tongue; while we *Testifie to Israel,* and make the *Voice of his Praise to be heard.*

And since the Infirmary of our Flesh is apt to hinder a steady Attention; the better to Fix and Compose it, to give a livelier Turn to our Thoughts, a sweeter Emphasis to the Words, the Temple should resound with the *voice of Melody*; with the Praises that are sung with *Understanding.* O sing Praises, sing Praises to our God! O sing Praises sing Praises to our King.

They, who contend for Vocal Musick in Opposition to Instrumental, would do well to examine and weigh this Passage: whether the Naked Unpolish'd Voice can fairly be term'd the *Voice of Melody*; whether Their Singing to the Lord without the Direction and Help of an Instrument can be reckon'd a *Performance with Understanding.*

If David's Example might be copied; *Awake Lute and Harp*; immediately follows *Awake up my Glory!* And his cheerful noise to the God of Jacob was not Full and Compleat till he blew up the Trumpet.

But

But David, with some Men, is no fit Pattern. He liv'd under the Mosaick Oeconomy consisting chiefly of Rites and *Shadows*, which are now to *Vanish* and Expire, the Things they Typified being Come.

But was Musick a Part of these Rites and *Shadows*? An *Eminent Author* has prov'd it was not. If in truth it be an Emblem of *good things to come*, 'tis an Emblem of such Things as are not yet Reveal'd.

The Glory and Happiness of our Future State is frequently Represented to us by the *Hallelujahs* of the Saints, the Harmonious Acclamations of the Holy Angels, the *continual Cry of Cherubin and Seraphin*, the *Song of the Lamb*, and the *Harps of God*.

When *Heaven and Earth shall pass away*, these Ideas likewise *shall pass away*. The Participation of endless Felicity will communicate *greater things than ev'n These*. But till the Antitype appears, till the Eternal Heavens open, and admit us to those Mysterious Joys, we ought to retain those Notions of them which the Word of God has Convey'd to us; and Persevere in that kind of Worship, which the Blessed Spirits are describ'd to Perform: That being the most Divine and Perfect, as far as we at present can Apprehend. *Therefore will we Sing to our Tuned Instruments all the days of our Life in the House of the Lord.*

Was

Decent and Useful. 11

Was Musick an Ingredient of the Jewish Worship, tho' Employ'd in That of the Idolatrous Nations? and must it be excluded the Christian Assemblies, because it was an useful Ornament to *Theirs*? If the Jews in this Particular forsook not the *manner of the Gentiles*; why compellest thou the Gentiles to forsake the *manner of the Jews*? to Recede from the Dictates of Natural Religion, because they were Ratified and Confirm'd by God Almighty's Institution?

Why should any desire to Hinder the Church from Conforming Thus, as near as she can, to the Righteous in Glory? and endeavour to Deprive her of That Help which Advanc'd Them thither?

For through the mighty Power of Notes, fram'd and adapted to holy Purposes, the Soul is drawn off from sensual Delights, is disengaged from *every Weight*, from the Cares and Pollutions of the World. All their Impressions are diverted by a more forcible and harmless Influence. The Passions move in their proper Channel, and *minister about Holy things*. They are *Dead unto sin, and Alive unto God*. So that the Whole Mind *having no part dark*, by no Inclinations perplex'd or stain'd, is releas'd from the *Burden of the Flesh*, and attends upon the Lord without Distraction. *My heart is fixt, O God, my heart is fixt; I will sing and give Praise.*

And

And here I should conclude this Head, were it not for the Mistake of Those, who, complying with our Cathedral Service in that *Part* of it, which is *Eucharistical*, Omit, and, by omitting, Disparage the *Other*: not knowing, that a skilful Hand can strike with Sorrow and Compunction; can humble the Gay and Sanguine Temper; draw Tears of Devotion (as our most Judicious Writer expresses it) and mix with the severest Repentance.

Quoties flevi in Canticis Ecclesie tua acriter commotus! are the words of a very Pious Father. A Soft Gentle Strain, a Grave Slow Movement, much more Expressive than Sighs and Groans (the usual signs of an Ignorant Piety) will Melt the Obstinate or Supine, and Oblige them to Relent.

This, I hope, may justify the Order of the Rubrick, which intended the Petitions in our Liturgie as well as the Praises should be Sung. The power of True Church-Musick being equally qualified to rejoyce with those that rejoyce, and to weep with those that weep; not Confin'd to the Voice that shouts for Mastery, but upon occasion joyning Consort with the Vanquish'd, when the Soul of the Wounded cryeth out.

And that so Beneficial an Art, so Strong and Prevalent, to Calm our Affections, to Wean them from the World, to Wing and Attract

tract them to their Almighty Creator is Good and Acceptable in his sight, The Third Particular comes next to shew.

We know that none of our Services are Pleasing to God, but as they conduce to the Advantage of his Servants. Our Oblations are vain in respect of Him; for *what receiveth He at our hands?* 'Tis the Elevation of our Souls, the refining them from their drossie Conceptions, the *fruit that redounds to our account*, the Rectitude of our Wills, and the Amendment of our Lives, that give a sweet Savour to our Vows; a Charming Accent to our Praises.

If These are not design'd by the Composer; if his Air excites Levity, it should be Censur'd and *cast out of the Church*: it offends the Ears of all sober Christians, and the Voice of God himself exclaims against it. *Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, for I will not hear the Melody of thy Viols!*

Religion (as an ingenious Author observes) ought to have every thing solemn in its retinue, and requires the assistance of the nicest Hand to Charm the Soul, and lift it up to Heaven. The Compositions should inspire a serious Humour, and strike an Awe upon our Minds. They should lay the Cares of the World asleep, and warm the heart into a Longing
C for

for the joys Above. They should keep a Man upon his Guard, prepare him for good Impressions, and *call the Sinner to Repentance.*

For a Divine Hymn set to wanton Notes is most vilely abus'd by such a wrong Emphasis; 'tis grossly Profan'd and Burlesqued in sounds. Musick is almost as Dangerous as 'tis Useful, *it has the Force of Gunpowder, and should be as carefully look'd after, that no unhallow'd Fire give it the power of Destroying.*

But then as there are Measures so light and trifling, that the hearing of them defiles the Sanctuary; there are Others so grave and solemn, that 'tis pity they are not appropriated to it. For if the Organ *give an uncertain Sound*, who can prepare his heart for Devotion?

There is a peculiar sort of Musick which ought to be consecrated for the Service of the Church, which, like the *Perfume* that was order'd for the holy Tabernacle, should be distinguish'd, and very different from that of *Common Use*. *Ye shall not make to your selves according to the Composition thereof; it shall be holy for the Lord.*

Thus would our *Words* infallibly *please him*, while such an engaging Pronunciation reminds us of what we are about, lays a Stress on them which can't well be withstood, enforces them with Life and Spirit, teaches

teaches us to Tremble with awful *Fear*, and to *Rejoyce* before him with *Reverence*.

How far God Almighty has vouchsafed to reveal his Approbation of this kind of Homage, we may easily gather from several Passages in holy Scripture.

The Royal Prophet that appointed *Singers* before the *Altar*, and with them *Heman* and *Jeduthun* to play and give Thanks with *Musical Instruments*, that beautified their Feasts, and set in order their solemn Times, that the Temple might sound from Morning, had this Testimony, that he pleas'd God. The Lord took away his Sins, and exalted his Horn for ever: he gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in Israel.

His Son was confirm'd in the same Worship by a visible Sign of the Divine Favour and Acceptance on the Feast of Dedication. For it came to pass as the Trumpeters and Singers were as one, and prais'd the Lord, saying, for he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever; that then the House was fill'd with a Cloud. The Glory of the Lord, who said he would dwell in the thick Darkness, descended and fill'd the house of God.

The greatest Victory, that has ever been Recorded, was an Answer to Prayers put up in this Manner. Five hundred thousand chosen Men were slain by the Courage of the Men of Judah. But how was this Cou-

blous

rage infus'd? How were they stirr'd up and fir'd into Action? Not by the Musick of the *Camp*, but the pious Shoutings in the *Beauty of Holiness*. There they cry'd unto the Lord; There the Priests sounded an Alarm, and behold God himself was with them for their Captain.

Had God no respect to these *Free-will Offerings*, such as found out Musical Tunes had never stood enroll'd with the strictest Observers of Religion, with the *Wise and Eloquent* Expounders of it, with those *Famous Men* that ruled over Kingdoms; Men renowned for their *Power*, giving Counsel by their *Understanding*, and declaring Prophecies; Men that were Honour'd in their *Generations*, and were the *Glory* of their *Times*.

We may further take Notice, that when the Jews made their Musick subservient to other Ends and Purposes than those of Piety and Devotion, the Holy Ghost complains of it's being misapply'd. *The Harp and the Viol are in their Feasts, but they regard not the Works of the Lord, nor consider the Operations of his Hands:* (i. e.) in other Words, They abuse these Means of Fixing their Thoughts on the Great and Wonderful Author of Nature, to the Prejudice of serious Thinking, and to the Encouragement of Intemperance.

And now, is it not Amazing to find, that what is so approv'd of by God himself, should

should be undervalued and expos'd by Those who Pretend to be most Influenc'd by his Spirit? But *are they Spiritual* indeed? So was *Miriam* the Prophetess, and yet she laid not aside her *Timbrel*. So were those *Prophets on the Hill of God, who met King Saul with Psalterys and Anthems*. So was *Elisba*, tho' he call'd for a *Minstrel* to dispose and prepare him for Inspiration. So was *Gabaziel*, tho' a *Musician of the Sons of Asaph*, who, being *superiour in Vision* to the rest of the Levites, deliver'd his Prince from the Invasion of Moab; and (to be short) so were some of the Corinthians in the Days of the Apostles, concerning whom 'tis said that they *sung by the Spirit*, that *each of them had a Psalm*, for the Benefit of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.

Why then do these Enemies of our Church reject and decry such external Helps, when They that wanted them less than Any of those that now despise them, look'd upon them as *Conducive to the renewing of the Mind*?

But we are not of those that commend themselves; we confess, that we are weak and impotent Creatures; that the *Flesh is daily fighting against the Spirit*; and therefore we endeavour, all we can, to Disarm it.

And truly were Men more holy than Commonly they are, They need not be Ashamed.

Asham'd of so sublime, so delightful an Assistant. 'Tis no Reflection on the Conduct or Valour of the Martial Hero, that a *Point of War* recruits his Strength, and pushes him on to take the Field. *He mocketh at Fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the Sword.*

So that the most Righteous Person living has no reason to Disdain Religious Musick, which will both refresh him in his Engagements against Temptations, and set off the Triumph it helps to procure.

However, the exploding outward Motives do's least of all become Those Men, who make use of them (such as they are) more than the Congregation from which they separate. Who are pray'd and preach'd into Raptures and Extasies by a *Whining Tone*, or a *Vehement Delivery*; by *expanded Hands*, and *distorted Looks*; by affected, ridiculous, and fantastical Gestures.

If there be any of our own Communion (as we hope there are not many) who, taking Church-Musick for a Relique of Popery, would have it altogether Silenc'd, they may assure themselves, that the letting it Drop would by little and little make room for weightier Alterations. And therefore, tho' they look upon it as a Disagreeable Piece of Antiquity, 'twere safer to let this *Ruine* stand, than by rashly *blowing it up* endanger

endanger the Cathedral to which it joyns.

For doubtless the Church of *England* had never any *Pastors* professing a Dislike to the Service of the Choir; unless such as *crept into it, and were not of it*; such as would have been very well content to be the last of their sacred Order.

All that are *genuine, true, and faithful*, if They have not an *Ear* for divine Musick, would no more be prevail'd with to have it put down, than those on whom it makes the deepest Impression.

These are more modest, than to Condemn what they can't Relish: more Publick-spirited, than to Defraud Us of a Supply, God has made up to Them some other way: more Cautious and Discerning, than not to perceive and suspect the Bottom of those Men's Designs, who have done what they could to undermine it.

May all such worthy Advocates for the Choir be as Bless'd as Those, that have *Ears to Hear*! Who, if with Decency and Reverence they *sing unto the Lord as long as they live*, shall have the Privilege to do it longer, They shall *praise their God, while they have their Being*, ev'n to all Eternity in his heavenly Kingdom; where their *Words shall for ever please him*; where their *Joy shall for ever be in the Lord*.

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